

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Water Quality Program

August 5, 1998

Background

The previous briefing to the Policy Group in July indicated that six working teams of the Water Quality Technical Group were performing advance work for the Implementation Phase of the program which included *refining water quality problem statements, developing additional detail of proposed actions and, recommending priorities for action*. The Policy Group was also informed of the status of *efforts to develop a panel of independent experts to consider the significance of bromide* to the CALFED choice of a Preferred Alternative. The following describes recent developments in these areas, and discusses plans and progress for responding to water quality comments on the Draft EIS/EIR.

Program Description

The objective of the Water Quality Program component is to provide good water quality for all beneficial uses. Through the Water Quality Technical Group, the body of agency staff and stakeholders who are providing ongoing advice and assistance to the program, water quality parameters of concern have been identified, water quality targets established, and programmatic action defined to improve water quality conditions in the CALFED Solution Area. Work continues on developing additional program detail and formulating increasingly detailed plans to implement water quality actions. Key tasks currently being worked on include performing advance planning work for the Implementation Phase of the Program, revising the Water Quality Technical Appendix to the EIS/EIR, including preparing responses to water quality comments, and organizing an independent panel of experts to provide CALFED management advice on the significance of bromide to the selection of a Preferred Alternative.

Current Program Status

Implementation Planning. The Water Quality Technical Group met on July 29, 1998. It was planned that, at that time, the six work teams that have been developing program details would provide CALFED with the products of the team deliberations. Due to vacation schedules and other factors, the complete products were not available on that day; however, most of the products have been received, or are presently being received. We have been provided with sufficient information to permit us to move forward with revising the Water Quality Program Plan, and to provide input to the framework document, cost estimates, and action priorities. In general, the products of the work teams are of good quality. These products will be used as the basis for revising the Water Quality Program Plan.

EIR Comment Responses. CALFED has received about 680 comments on water quality aspects of the Program. Responses to about 25 percent of these comments have been prepared as of the present time.

Water Quality Program Plan Revision. Efforts to complete revision of the plan are fairly well on schedule, pending receipt of final products from the six working teams of the Water Quality Technical Group.

Bromide Expert Panel. Contractual arrangements are on track for a September 8-9, 1998 meeting of the expert panel. The panel and their primary areas of expertise are as follows:

- Professor Gary Amy, University of Colorado - Chemistry of disinfection byproduct formation
- Dr. Richard Bull, Batelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory- Health effects of disinfection byproducts
- Professor Kenneth Kerri, California State University (Ret.) - Source control options
- Mr. Stig Regli, USEPA - Regulation development
- Professor Philip Singer - University of North Carolina - Treatment technology

We did succeed in enlisting the panelists who were most frequently identified by stakeholders as the best qualified and most independent of the prospective candidates. We anticipate having the panel report on or near October 1, 1998. The report completion schedule may be somewhat optimistic but it is our intention to press to meet this date.